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**MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**

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**M E M O R A N D U M**

**DIVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**

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February 3, 2000

**TO:** Directors of Special Education  
Teachers of the Visually Impaired

**FROM:** Pam Williams

**RE:** HB401: Referral of Students to Rehabilitation Services for the Blind

During the last session, the legislature passed HB401 which made revisions to state law relating to services for student with disabilities. One of the provisions of HB401 addressed referral of students with Visual Impairments to Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB). The purpose of this memorandum is to advise districts concerning the provisions of this law and to give guidance as to how referrals should be conducted and documented.

Process for referral from districts to RSB

HB401 provided that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Division of Special Education, and the Department of Social Services, Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) would develop jointly a process for referring identified students from the local education agency (LEA) to the RSB.

*All children identified by a school district or the division of special education as eligible students, upon receipt of written documentation of parental consent or consent of the student (if the student is at least eighteen years of age) shall be referred to rehabilitation services for the blind.*

In order to complete a referral, the following steps should be followed:

1. For all previously identified students with Visual Impairments, at the next IEP review meeting, discuss with the parent/guardian/student (age 18+) a referral to Rehabilitation Services for the Blind. If the parent/guardian/student (age 18+) agrees, obtain written consent (see attached sample form).
2. For any initially identified students with Visual Impairments during the 1999-2000 school year and all subsequent years, discuss a referral to RSB with parent/guardian/student (age 18+) at the initial IEP. If the parent/guardian/student (age 18+) agrees, obtain written consent (see attached sample form).
3. Document on the student's IEP that the referral to RSB was discussed.

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4. Maintain documentation in the student's file of the parent/guardian/student (age 18+) decision regarding the referral (see attached sample form).
  5. If the parent/guardian/student (age 18+) wishes a referral to be made and has given written consent, forward a copy of the completed referral form to:  
  
Ms. Sally Howard  
Rehabilitation Services for the Blind  
P. O. Box 88  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65103
  6. The district may also wish to provide copies of the attached RSB flyers "Children's Services" and "Vocational Rehabilitation Transition Services" to the parent/guardian/student (age 18+) along with a copy of the referral form.
  7. The purpose of this referral is for RSB to have the opportunity to discuss the services they can provide to the student.

#### Process for referral from RSB to DESE/LEAs

A second provision in the law requires RSB to refer eligible students to the DESE and LEAs.

*All children identified by rehabilitation services for the blind as being eligible for services will be referred, upon receipt of written documentation of parental consent or consent of the student if the student is at least eighteen years of age, to the local school district and the division of special education of the department of elementary and secondary education.*

The steps that will be followed for this type of referral are as follows:

1. RSB determines a student eligible.
2. RSB obtains written consent from the parent/guardian/student (age 18+).
3. RSB sends information on student to the DESE, Division of Special Education.
4. DESE notifies district of student referral from RSB.
5. LEA follows up on referral with parent/guardian/student (age 18+).

If you have questions regarding this referral process, contact Ms. Sandra Weller, Program Specialist, at 573-526-7605.

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Enclosures (3)

c: Dr. Stephen Barr  
Ms. Melodie Friedebach  
Ms. Joyce Jackman  
Area Supervisors for Special Education  
Ms. Sally Howard